

Warning Regarding Petition Preparers

Only an attorney is authorized to give you legal advice regarding a bankruptcy case or proceeding.

So-called “petition preparers” are not authorized to give debtors legal advice. Their role is strictly that of a typing service transcribing for a minimal fee the information a client provides. For example, they **cannot**:

Make suggestions regarding what papers are legally appropriate

Advise you regarding what is legally required when a form elicits information from you

Explain the meaning of a particular statutory provision or rule

Provide advice on the best procedure to accomplish a particular goal

Explain the result of taking or not taking action in a case

Explain who should receive proper notice or service

Most of the required forms in a bankruptcy case are available for free, and most are in pdf-fillable form so that they can be completed using a keyboard. If you do not have a computer, check at the Clerk’s intake counter regarding the availability of a computer you may use, free of charge, for the purpose of filling out the required forms.

Given the availability on the internet of pdf-fillable forms, there is little or no reason for a debtor to pay a non-attorney “petition preparer” to obtain the forms. Properly completing those forms, however, may require advice of competent legal counsel; a petition preparer may not give you such legal advice.

Warning to Petition Preparers: Section 110 of the Bankruptcy Code provides civil penalties for persons, other than an attorney or an employee of an attorney, who negligently or fraudulently prepare bankruptcy petitions or any other document for filing by a debtor in connection with a bankruptcy case. All petition preparers shall comply with the requirements of 11 U.S.C. § 110. Failure to comply with § 110 may result in civil enforcement action by the United States Trustee or subject the preparer to criminal prosecution under 18 U.S.C. § 156.